

REMARKS

With entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-3, 10-11, 18 and 23-38 are now pending in the application - - claims 1, 2 and 18 having been amended and claims 27-38 having been added. Claims 4-9, 12-17 and 19-22 are withdrawn as relating to non-elected species. Reconsideration is requested.

The Examiner indicates the previously submitted copies of documents 36-40 are not legible. Applicants regret any inconvenience and enclose additional copies of those documents for consideration by the Examiner along with a replacement Form PTO-1449. The cover page of each document is numbered in the upper right hand corner. No fees are believed due; but, if so, please charge any necessary fees to our Deposit Account No. 15-0508.

Claims 1-3, 11, 18, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by deBeer (webpages showing deBeer Wizard head). Independent claims 1 and 18 from which the other rejected claims depend, have been amended to emphasize that the ball guide fingers each have a sloped, substantially rounded outer surface for contacting the ball. As can be seen in deBeer, the Wizard head has fin-like "fingers". These "fin-like" fingers have elongated cross-sectional shape as opposed to applicants' claimed invention. The fin-like "fingers" of deBeer, in contrast to applicants' claimed invention, are prone to being worn down or bent over in use. deBeer's fins are uniformly thin throughout and react to high speed impact in a manner different than applicants' claimed invention, which alone provides improved performance. Accordingly, this rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) is believed to have been fully overcome.

Claims 1-2, 11, 18 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Morrow (U.S. Patent No. 6,066,056). Applicants' independent claims 1 and 18, from which the other rejected claims depend, recite a plurality of elongate ball guide fingers each having a sloped, substantially rounded outer surface for contacting the ball. In contrast, Morrow discloses "fingers" which are generally prismatic in shape, which therefore lack a substantially rounded outer surface for contacting the ball. Only applicants' claimed invention provides improved ball control. Accordingly, this rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is believed to have been fully overcome.

Claims 1-2, 10, 11, 18, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Lockwood (U.S. Patent No. 2,710,753). Applicants' independent claims 1 and 18, from which the remaining rejected claims depend, recite ball guide fingers each having a sloped, substantially rounded outer surface for contacting the ball. In contrast, the "fingers" of Lockwood comprise cords of generally cylindrical shape which lack applicants' claimed sloped outer surface for contacting the ball. Accordingly, this rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is believed to have been fully overcome.

Claims 1-2, 11, 18 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Naumburg (U.S. Design Patent No. 318,509). Independent claims 1 and 18 from which the remaining rejected claims depend, recite ball guide fingers each having a sloped, substantially rounded outer surface for contacting the ball. In contrast, Naumburg shows "fingers" comprising cords or cord-like elements having a generally cylindrical shape and flat segmented pads contrary to applicants' claimed invention. Only applicants' claimed invention provides improved performance, not possible with the arrangement of Naumburg. Accordingly, this rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) is believed to have been fully overcome.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over deBeer. Claim 10 which depends from independent claim 1 is believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth above with respect to independent claim 1. Accordingly, this rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is believed to have been fully overcome.

Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over deBeer. Claim 25, which depends from independent claim 18 is believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 18. Accordingly, this rejection of claim 25 is believed to have been fully overcome.

Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over deBeer. Claim 26, which depends from claim 18, is believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 18. Accordingly, this rejection of claim 26 is believed to have been fully overcome.

No new matter has been introduced with the above amendments to the claims. For example, support for the amendment to claims 1 and 30, 18 and 35 is found in the Figures generally, and Figure 4 in particular, as well as at page 5, lines 4-10 of the specification. Support

for the amendment to claim 2 is found in the Figures generally, in claim 18 as originally filed and in page 5, lines 13-17.

Newly added claims 27-38 are believed to patentably define over the prior art. These newly added claims read on applicant's elected species. Support for these newly added claims is found in the specification and drawings. For example, support for newly added claims 27 and 28 is found generally in the drawings, in Figure 4 in particular, and at page 5, lines 6 and 7. Support for newly added claims 29 and 30 is found on page 4, lines 11-16 and 28-32. Support for newly added claims 31 and 34 is found in the drawings in general, in Figure 4 in particular, and at page 5, lines 31 and 32. Support for newly added claims 32 and 35 is found in the drawings generally, in Figure 4 in particular, and at page 5, lines 3-10 and lines 21-22. Support for newly added claims 33 and 36 is found in the drawings in general, in Figure 4 in particular, and at page 5, lines 28-31. Support for newly added claims 37 and 38 is found at page 5, lines 13-17 and page 9, lines 23-29.

Our check in the amount of \$600.00 is enclosed to cover the additional claim fees for new dependent claims 27-38. Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 15-0508.

Early reconsideration and passage of this application to issue is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

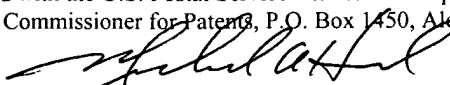
Date: February 10, 2006

By 
Michael A. Hierl (Reg. No. 29,807)

OLSON & HIERL, LTD.
20 North Wacker Drive
36th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 580-1180
Attorneys for Applicants

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this paper is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on February 10, 2006.


Michael A. Hierl